Betty's Policeman

Mrs. Wadsworth Warren

Joyce Gottman

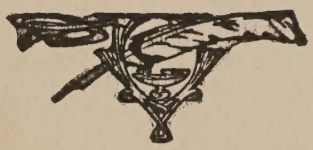
Betty's Policeman

BY

Mrs. Wadsworth Warren

Illustrated by

Julia Dyar Hardy



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THE writer of this story loves children, and the love of children, if anything will save the world.

One feels wholesome, glad and clean, having walked with Betty.

Mrs. Warren has no problem to solve, no abnormality to toy with. But she has an eye for the sweet normality of a child; and she shows us her vision as she might a flower not tearing it piecemeal to prove it is a flower, but regaling us with it's color, freshness and fragrance.

The artlessness of the narrative is misleading; the style is as simple as Betty herself; but fine workmanship always conceals itself; and the transparent candor of the language of

"Betty's Policeman"

is the product, we may be sure, of hours of slavish labor in self-expression.

J. A. McCLOREY, S. J.

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Betty's Policeman

CHAPTER I

Whenever Betty Dean walked in Central Park with Margaret, her nurse, everyone turned and looked at her, and if they didn't really say it aloud, they all thought, "What a lovely child!" Betty was lovely. Her golden curls and laughing brown eyes made people happy just to see her.

She skipped and jumped along the paths of the park, talking to the birds, feeding the squirrels, coming back to nurse only when she caught a glimpse of a policeman coming towards her.

Betty was very much afraid of policemen. Grown-ups had told her they were cruel to little children unless they were always very good, and grown-ups surely ought to know. They had all lived long enough to know everything. Betty wasn't quite sure she had always been perfectly good, and so she always ran whenever she saw a policeman.

Betty lived with her father and mother in a beautiful home on Riverside Drive. She simply worshipped

her father. She loved her mother dearly, too, but somehow she didn't seem to know her quite so well as she did her father. Ever since the death of Betty's little brother, a few years ago, her mother had been an invalid. She could not bear to have children about her; even her own little girl always seemed to remind her of the loss of her boy.

Betty knew she brought tears to her mother's eyes but she couldn't understand why, so she always ran to her father for comfort.

One morning, just as Betty was starting for her walk in the park, her father called her into the library. Betty could see that he was worried as he told her he was going to have some great doctors come that day to see if they could decide what was the best thing to do to make her mother regain her strength. Perhaps they might even have to take her away to the mountains.

Betty did so want her mother to be well and strong like all other little girls' mothers, and perhaps then she would like to have more children and dogs about her. As she kissed her father, she said: "Don't you worry, Daddy. If she has to go away to get well, I'll take care of you and play with you so you won't be lonesome."

As Betty stood in the park feeding one of her bird friends, she all at once remembered that her father had not laughed back at her his usual "All right, Betty." He had seemed sad and only said, "My Betty, darling."

"I think I had better go right home and comfort him," decided Betty. Calling Margaret she waved "good-bye" to all the birds, saying a prayer to herself for God to keep all the bad boys from throwing stones at them until she saw them again. Then she hurried back home.

CHAPTER II

All the doctors decided that Betty's mother would have to go away to a place where there would be no snow or cold, that she must stay the whole winter and not come back until it was spring again, when the little birds would be singing, when the little boys would be playing marbles and the little girls skipping their ropes.

Betty wondered if when mother returned she would laugh and show the pretty dimples that were in funny places about her dear mouth. Margaret, the nurse, said: "Your father thinks you will have to go too; I think it's just nonsense."

"Oh, I hope I won't have to go," said Betty. "I think I ought to stay home with father."

"Well, baby, run and tell him. Goodness knows, I hope your father will keep you with him," Margaret snapped.

Betty ran down to the library and, opening the door

softly, she saw her father sitting in his own big arm chair.

"Daddy, Daddy," cried Betty, getting on his lap, "don't send me away from you. I can't go; I can't leave you!"

"But, Betty dear, you must go to take care of your poor sick mother," her father said, putting his arms around her.

"But I can't go, Daddy. I just can't leave Hope and Olive, and Reddy and Don; you know they are my best friends. Can't you come too, Daddy?" sobbed Betty.

"Now, my own little girlie, you mustn't tease father. He will have to stay at home and work to earn money for the care of the sick mother. We must give her every possible comfort, you know."

Betty saw there were big tears in his eyes as he bent over and kissed her, then brushing the curls away from her little pink ears he whispered, "You will have to be father's little partner. We will go into business together and it will be our work to make mother better. This will be our secret. Your part of the business is to go away with mother, take good care of her, and bring her back home to me well and strong. Promise me, Betty dear, that you will never

be a trouble to her in any way. Can you do this, my little girl, and will you always keep your promise, my little partner?"

With a chubby hand Betty pushed the tears back so father would not see them fall, and standing up very straight, she answered, "Yes, Daddy, I promise to do all you ask. I will be just as good as can be. I won't ever bother mother, no, not one time. I will be all my life long just your little partner."

CHAPTER III

Mr. Dean didn't know just how hard it was for Betty to leave him. He would have been very much surprised if he knew how Margaret frightened Betty at night with her stories. She always seemed kind and had been with the family so many years that Mr. Dean trusted her in every way. He surely would have been very angry could he have heard Margaret telling Betty that there were bears under her bed and that they would come out and eat up a little girl who wouldn't go to sleep.

Betty's father was a great hunter and once had killed a bear, and so Betty knew that if there really was one there and it came out from under the bed, he could come and shoot it. Then she would hug her dolly tight and go to sleep, sure that her father would take care of her. He was so good and strong and brave.

But Betty often wished she could tell him how

afraid she was of bears, of the darkness and of the many queer things she saw and heard when the lights were out. She wanted to ask him to leave the light burning in her room until the coming of the sleepman.

Once Betty told Margaret that she was going to tell her father how afraid she was of the dark, but Margaret shook her so roughly it almost made her cry, and said, "Betty, if you do such a naughty thing I shall give you to the policeman at once. He will put you in a black wagon, carry you off to jail, and feed you on nothing but bread and water, and you'll never see your father again."

That frightened Betty even more than it did when Margaret told her there were bears under the bed. She had never seen the bears, but every time they went out for a walk they saw all kinds of policemen. Once she asked her father if he could fight a policeman. He laughed heartily and replied, "Well, I guess not. He would make short work of me with his big black club."

"Yes, then it must be all so terribly true, just as Margaret has told me," thought Betty. "They always carry a club, and somewhere in their pockets is a gun and some ugly iron things."

Betty became so afraid of policemen that when she

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saw one coming she would run as fast as she could. One day she had to pass a policeman on the street, and when he said, "Good morning, my little girl," Betty trembled so much she thought she was going to fall and not be able to run away from him. He called to her, "Why, child, don't be afraid of me; I won't hurt you." At this Betty screamed and shrieked so loudly that the policeman walked away saying to himself: "Poor little thing, someone has told her the policeman will get her if she isn't good. That's why all the children fear us, and why it is so hard to help them when they are lost: They are so afraid they won't even tell us their names."

Betty ran all the way home. When her mother asked her what had happened, she wouldn't tell, because she was afraid Margaret would punish her again.

CHAPTER IV

Betty hoped her mother would go to California. Her Uncle Robert had told her it was always warm and sunshiny there, and when Betty asked him if they had bears or policemen he answered in his jolly Western way, "No, indeed, Golden Locks, there are no bears. The bears left in disgust when the burros moved in. And the cowboys cut all the brass buttons off the policemen's coats until they ran away and hid in the mountains, and they will never come back as long as the cowboys rule the land."

Don and Olive thought it a joke, but Hope believed him, and so did Betty.

"Yes, that is where we must go," thought Betty, and that night she begged her father to let them go where it never rained, where it never snowed, where oranges rolled on the ground, and burros walked the streets looking for little children to ride upon their backs.

Finally, her father said, "Why, Betty, if you are so sure you are going to be happy in California, I think we shall have to decide that that is the place."

Betty was so happy that she jumped up and down and, running to her father, she gave him a big hug and laughingly said, "Oh, thank you, thank you, Daddy dear, for letting us go to California! You know it is the only place where I would dare to go without my partner."

Her father wondered just what Betty meant. He little thought that Betty's whole idea in going to California was to be safe from bears and policemen. He stood watching her with loving eyes as she slowly went up the stairs. Stopping half way, she called, "Father, don't forget our secret." Then throwing him one last little good-night kiss, Betty went to her room — to Margaret and the dark.

CHAPTER V

Betty's best friends were Olive and Hope Richmond, two little girls who lived in a house next door, and Don Carlos, the gardener's boy, and Reddy, the puppy.

Olive and Hope both loved dolls, and nursed and cared for them as if they were real babies.

Olive had beautiful blue eyes and skin like rose leaves, while Betty always felt that Hope was a fairy and some day would fly away, she was such a dainty little lady.

Don Carlos was a handsome and very polite boy. His father and mother had died in the hospital, leaving Don a little baby all alone. Mrs. Dean used to send John, the gardener, there with flowers every day, and when he learned about the baby he rolled him up in a blanket and took him to his wife as a Christmas present, and there he had lived ever since. His soft black eyes and gentle manner had won from Betty's

father the name of "Don Carlos," because he made him think of a grand man who had once lived in Spain.

And Reddy? Well, Reddy was just the dearest puppy dog. He was a birthday present to Betty from her father. He was a soft, curly cocker spaniel, with wistful eyes that always seemed to say "Please be kind to me."

Betty called him "Reddy," because his hair was red, his eyelashes were red, and his eyes were reddish-brown. He was always ready to do anything that he wanted and Mr. Dean said that was one of the finest things in the world, "Always just being ready and on time."

Betty used to hug him and whisper in his silky ear, "Precious, you will always take care of me when you see a big policeman coming, won't you, sweet? Father says burglars are scared of dogs, so I guess you could make policemen and bears run away."

Reddy promised, by snuggling all the closer in Betty's arms.

* * * * *

"I am going to California, to California," cried Betty to Olive, Hope and Don when she saw them coming through the yard the next day to find out

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just what the doctors had decided to do about her mother.

"I shall see Uncle Robert and ride on a burro. Oh, goodie, goodie, won't it be fun?"

Hope just gave a little sigh and Don began digging a hole in the ground with his foot.

"What shall we do without you, Betty," asked Olive.

"Oh, I am so sorry to go and leave you all, but father says I must. It is to help him, but I will write you and send you so many post-cards you will have a great, big book full of just mine."

"We will write to you, won't we, Don?" said Hope.

"Bet you I will," said Don. "But what about Reddy?"

"I don't know," said Betty; "I can't take him. Mother doesn't want him. Daddy says he has to keep some of the family with him, so I guess it will have to be Reddy."

"Never mind, Betty, we will take good care of him. Every day we will take him for a good run and teach him a new trick and surprise you when you get home," replied Don.

They all smiled at that but Olive. In a sad voice she said, "Teacher told us in school to-day that if our friends died, if we did a lot of things we knew they

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would like to have us do, it would make us a great deal happier."

"Oh, dear, dear, I am not dead yet," and Betty began to cry.

Then Hope, who always hated to be left out of anything, joined in and Reddy knew he must follow the children, and started such a howling that it surprised himself. It was such a long, funny one, almost like a fireboat whistle, that Betty and Hope had to laugh.

Then Don, who wouldn't cry because he was a boy, said, "I do feel dreadful to have Betty go away, but she's got to go, so that ends it. Let's not waste any more time, but just play every minute till she goes."

CHAPTER VI

The week passed so quickly the children could hardly believe the day had really come for Betty to go and leave them. They went to the station to say good-bye, and just as Betty was being lifted on the train, Don, Hope and Olive each put a package in her hands and ran away as fast as they could. Betty had to say good-bye to so many friends and everyone was in such a hurry, even Daddy, that she couldn't tell him all the things she wanted. She just had one little chance to hug him and whisper, "I won't forget our secret, father dear," and he was gone. Everyone else was gone, too, then, and the train began slowly pulling out of the station.

Betty looked out of her window and kept very quiet while nurse was making mother comfortable. She sat very still, watching the houses and factories they were passing. Soon they were out where there were only

houses and trees, and she knew it was the last of home and New York until spring.

It gave her a queer feeling and she looked to see if mother could talk to her, but Margaret shook her head for her to keep quiet. A little hurt, she wondered what she could do, when she remembered her packages from Olive, Hope and Don Carlos.

"I will open Don's first," thought Betty, "because boys never know what girls like." Oh, what a surprise — the most beautiful paper doll, with lovely gowns and coats and hats to match and a whole set of paper furniture, even to a victrola. "What a dear boy Don is!" Betty exclaimed. "I know he painted them himself. Daddy thinks he will be a great artist some day.

"Now I wonder what Olive has given me," said Betty to herself as she began opening the box. "Olive knows the very things that I like." Surely Olive had not failed her this time. There were puzzle pictures and games and all could be played alone. "What a good time I shall have with them," smiled Betty, who liked any kind of a game.

Hope's box was filled with a lot of little packages. Betty didn't know which one to open first, but finally decided on a flat, round one. Betty could hardly keep

from screaming aloud, she was so delighted. It was a beautiful, tiny Swiss watch, blue and gold, with a chain so she could wear it around her neck.

"I wonder how Hope could ever let me have this beautiful watch when she is always teasing for one." Betty was putting it in the case to look for some of the other things when she saw one of her father's cards and on it was written:

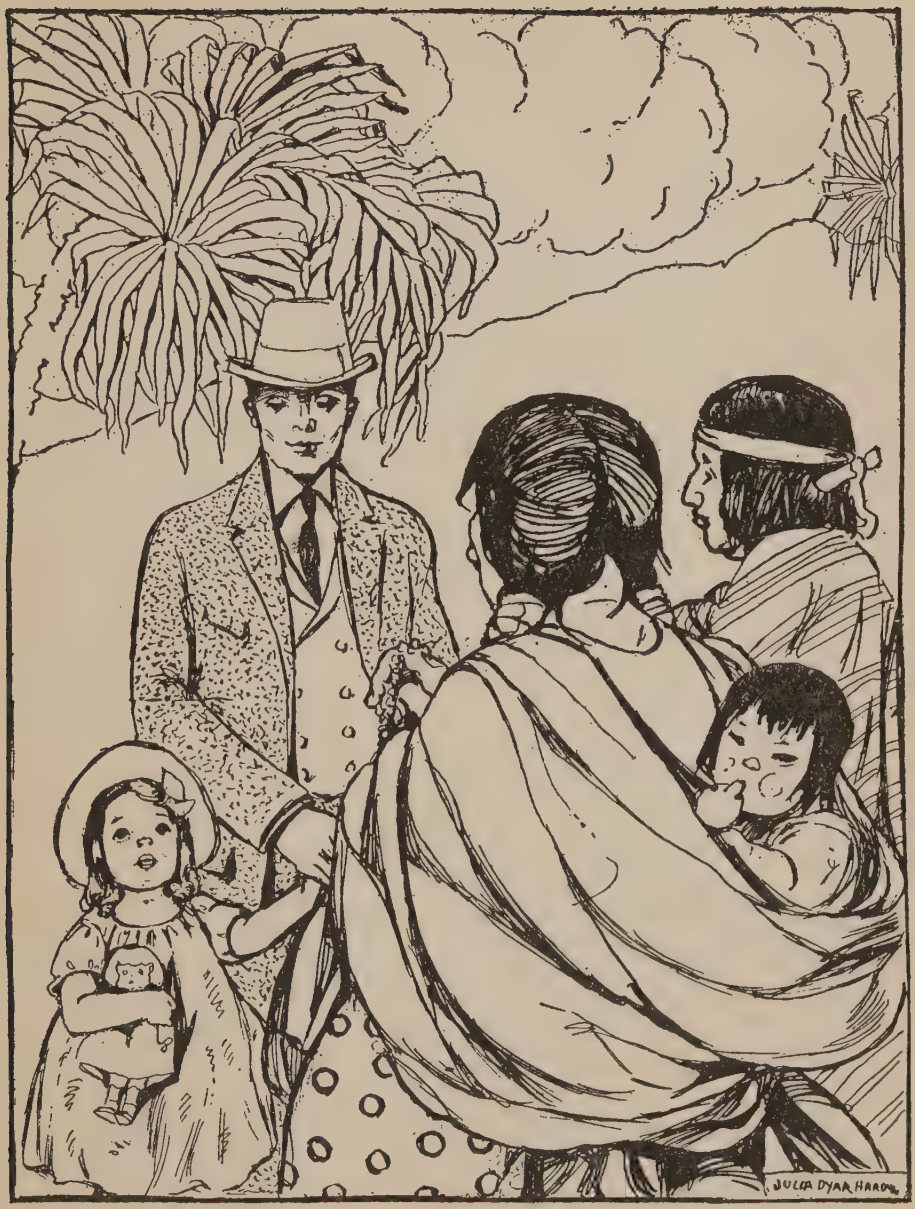
"To my little Betty, to remind her of a promise she made her father."

"Oh, then, it's not from Hope. I am so glad it isn't. I would not feel happy to take a watch away from her, when I know how much she wants one herself. What a perfectly splendid Daddy."

Such funny things Hope had put in. Sometimes Betty was sure it was a book and it turned out to be a box of candy, or colored crayons, or a cunning little box of paper.

"She thinks I am going to write all the time," laughed Betty.

In the bottom of the box was a photograph of Olive, Hope, Don Carlos and Reddy, and that was the very best present of all. Betty, seeing that nurse and mother were not watching her, kissed the picture over and over again.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It was a long, tiresome ride to California. The worst part was the desert, where the terrible alkali dust came in the windows and doors. But a kind man on the car told her about the prairie dog, owl and rattlesnake that all live in the same little house in the sand, so she had lots of fun watching for them, but all that she ever saw was the prairie dog. The kind man — and there seems to be one on every journey — took her for little walks at the stations where they stopped, and bought her beads of the Indians. She did not care for the Indians or squaws, even when they had little babies strapped on their backs. She clung tightly to the kind man's hand while there was one in sight.

Betty loved the mountains and wished her Daddy could be there to tell her just how they all happened. The kind man said, "It is because the earth fell down and bumped its head, and the mountains are the swollen spots where it was bruised."

He was a funny man, and Betty grew very fond of him and felt very sorry to have him leave her at a station about an hour before they reached their own. He promised to write, and Betty promised to answer and to send him her picture.

He said, "I just know you will forget me," but

Betty never did. Even when she was a grown-up she always remembered how good and thoughtful he was, and felt very sorry for everyone who had traveled and had never met a "kind man."

It was late in the evening when the mother, Betty and Margaret arrived at their first resting place — Los Angeles. To Betty's surprise there was a big railway station just like the one in her city, only here everyone pushed and crowded as if afraid he would not be the first to get in or the first to get out.

Betty was so tired and sleepy she was glad to have Margaret hurry along out to the taxicab that was to take them to their hotel, where Betty went to sleep so quickly she hardly knew she was in California.

CHAPTER VII

She remembered it all the next morning. Jumping out of bed, she ran to the window to see the flowers and oranges and burros Uncle Robert had told her about. But they weren't there, and neither was the sunshine. It was only cold and dreary. Where, Oh, where was the lovely warm weather that was going to cure her mother? Betty was just beginning to cry when she heard her mother cough. "Oh, dear," sobbed Betty, "if father was only here, he could help her."

Then she stopped crying and wiped the tears away, for she remembered the little secret — their secret, father's and hers, that she must always be a help to her mother. "I must keep my promise," thought Betty. "I must be brave and true," and running to her mother's room she said: "Never mind, mamkins. It's too bad about the rain, but I think it's because we are in a hotel. Father said we should find a place in

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the mountains to live and that is where we must go. The sun is shining behind the hills, waiting for us to come. When it sees you, mother darling, it will smile and say, 'Don't you worry, my dearest: I can shine so bright and warm in California that I can drive all the bad, hard coughs away.' Oh, it will cure you, mother, I know it, I know it perfectly well."

Betty danced around the room, clapping her hands so happily that the mother stopped coughing and watched her with a bright little smile, almost making a dimple show. Margaret, too, saw her and said, "Well, now, I thought Betty would carry on pretty bad when she saw the rain, and I just expected to have a time with her, but she certainly is good about it."

When Betty saw the smile on her mother's face she whispered to herself, "Now if mother can only eat some breakfast, I will have done some of my work to-day and kept part of my promise to father."

When breakfast was served the hard awful cough came back. Betty tried to do so many things to help stop it that it tired her mother. Margaret, seeing this, told her to run right out of the room and keep quiet. Margaret, in her rough way, loved Betty, but the mother needed her more than did the little girl.

The nurse felt it was right to use any means to save her from being disturbed. She had soon learned that the easiest way to make Betty mind was to frighten her.

Poor little Betty tried very hard to amuse herself the rest of that day and the many days that followed. She wrote long letters to her father, Hope, Olive and Don Carlos, but was not allowed to see her mother, who had become quite ill.

It was so still and lonely, and the only sound to be heard was a short dry cough that came from her mother's room.

Sometimes one of the bell boys talked to Betty, but he told her such dreadful things about the weather that it almost made her sorry that she had teased to come to California. He said that once it had rained three whole weeks without stopping; that the water swept all the street car tracks away and washed great rocks down the mountain-side, which fell into the valley below with such an awful crash that the tourists thought it must be thunder. And it scared the Chinamen so that they ran away so fast that their cues stood straight out from their heads and, drawing their baggy trousers up to their knees, they never stopped running until they reached their homes.

If anyone asked them why they were in such a hurry or at what they were frightened, they just yelled, "Too muchee noise, too muchee noise for China boy. Me no likee — me no likee!" and that was all they saw of the Sam Lees until the rain was over and the sun shone again.

As the bell boy told this tale he rolled his eyes around the room, scratching one leg with the other foot as he braced himself against the door and rattled his bunch of keys.

Just then Margaret came. She gave him a cross look and then slammed the door in his face. The bell boy stared thoughtfully at the closed door for a few moments, then with head down, arms swinging, he slowly walked away, whistling a low sad tune.

CHAPTER VIII

A few days later, when the doctor called, Betty heard him say: "Ah, my dear lady, you certainly are looking better this morning. You people who come from the East feel worse for a few weeks after you arrive here. Some of it is change of climate, and some of it is homesickness; you realize that your home and friends are far away. You are now going to be stronger. By noon the sun will be shining, and our California sun is no slow lazy one. When on duty it works very hard. In a few hours everything will be dry. Then you must get out and breathe some of our good, pure air."

Betty fairly danced around the room with joy. Perhaps now they would find a house where mother could have a yard and a beautiful rose garden where she could sit under one of the acacia trees covered with gorgeous yellow blossoms.

Her Uncle Robert, with a funny little wink in his

eyes, had told her a queer story about the acacia trees being covered with beautiful tiny bell-like blossoms. He thought the fairies must have been visiting the birdies in the trees at night, and becoming frightened had run away so fast they lost all the golden bells off from their wings. The trees still kept the bells on their branches, but the fairies never came back.

"Of course, Golden Locks," he said, "the bells never ring while they are on the trees; they are too sad. They only jingle when they are fastened to the fairies' wings."

"Come, Betty," said Margaret, "hurry and put your dolls away. Your mother will take a good long rest, while we go out to find a home among the hills. The doctor says that is where we will get plenty of fresh air and wholesome food."

Up the hills they wandered. Betty wondered why they panted with the heat going up and shivered with the cold coming down. She thought they never would find a place because it took so much time putting on their coats and taking them off again.

"Never mind," said Margaret, "here is the house the doctor told me to try first, and he was sure we would like it."

She rang the bell and a motherly looking woman

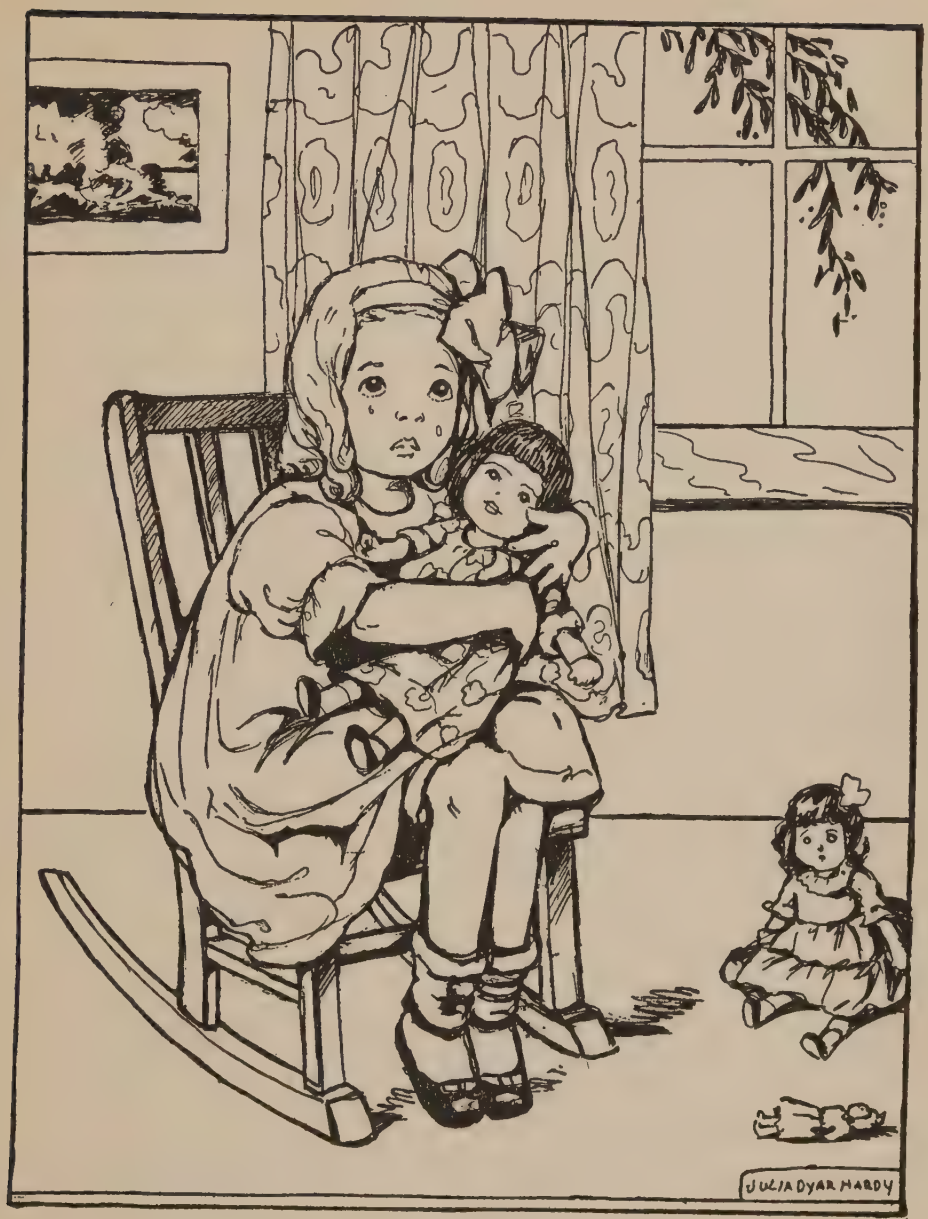
came to the door. Betty thought she could love her. The woman assured Margaret she could make her and her mistress very comfortable, but as for children she wouldn't have one in her house. Margaret explained that Betty was a good child and accustomed to being with sick people and would never disturb anyone. "Can't be bothered," was the answer as the door was slammed in their faces, leaving Betty and Margaret standing outside.

Margaret said, "Well, we can't tell. Perhaps she has had some disagreeable, horrid children in her home, and that makes her feel that there are no good ones in the world."

They went from house to house, only to receive the same answer, "No, we can't take children; so many of our people are invalids who are too nervous to endure even the laughter of the little ones."

Tired and discouraged, Betty and Margaret walked wearily back to the hotel. Margaret jerked off her black hat and, jabbing the hatpin into it, said to Mrs. Dean: "We found lovely homes where you could have had every comfort, but they won't take children."

"Oh," coughed the mother, "it was all a mistake to bring Betty. I told her father so, but he thought she would be company for me. Why did we bring her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here?" And the poor woman, tired from her lonesome afternoon, buried her head in the pillow and wept.

Little Betty had no tears in her wistful, brown eyes as she stole quietly out of the room.

At bedtime Margaret found her sitting alone with her head on her hands and her elbow resting on the arm of the chair. "Just thinking," said Betty, when asked why she was so quiet.

But it was a sad, almost grown-up face that bent gently over the mother and left on her lips a little good-night kiss a little later. When Margaret turned out the lights for the night, she wondered at Betty's going to sleep so quickly. She little knew that Betty was far from slumberland. She was still thinking of how she could keep her promise to her father.

"I must go away," sobbed Betty to her dolly. "Mother doesn't want me here. I promised father I would never bother her. I must keep my promise or I won't be a good partner. Oh, where can we go?"

Betty hid her face in dolly's so her mother wouldn't hear her. Sleep came gently, soothing Betty's little baby heart and a smile parted her lips as she whispered to dolly, "I will just trust my father. He said, 'the angels will take care of you, Betty dear,' and, Dolly, father knows."

CHAPTER IX

Early the next morning, while walking along on Main Street, a jolly, stout, good-natured policeman saw a little girl standing at the corner, holding her dolly closely in her arms. She eagerly watched every street car as it passed. The policeman said, "Hello, little girl, are you expecting someone on the cars?"

To his surprise, she ran away as fast as she could without answering.

"Wish I could have helped the child; she looked so very unhappy," he said, as Betty disappeared.

"I must surely take the next car," thought Betty. "I never will believe Uncle Robert again. He said there were no policemen in California. I have my own ten cents mother gave me yesterday — I will ask the conductor how far that will take me."

"To the Church of the Angels," the conductor answered, when Betty inquired where he was going.

"To the Church of the Angels," Betty cried, her

face all dimples and smiles. "Oh, Dolly, didn't father say they would take care of me. Now mother can have everything she needs and we shall be happy and safe in the Angels' Church."

From the cloudy, dirty city, the train fairly flew, climbing up the hills and going down them so fast it nearly threw Betty off her seat. They went through beautiful valleys, spreading their carpets of rich velvety greenness until Betty longed to get out and roll over and over on them. In the distance, Old Baldy, the great snow-covered mountain, sparkled and glistened in the sunlight. Day and night it seemed to stand like a huge sentinel guarding the hills and valleys below. The train made a sharp turn, and again began climbing another hill. Betty at first thought they were going right through it, but in a moment the train came to a sudden stop, the conductor called out, "All aboard for Los Angeles," and Betty knew she had reached the end of her journey. She stepped out of the car and right before her on the side of the hill nestled the dearest little church she had ever seen. It was not too high, nor too low, nor too wide nor too long. To Betty it seemed just perfect and did not give her the feeling of fear that she had for the big city churches.

She walked through the gate, following the path with its border of roses.

"It's so homy, I just love it," said Betty. "The angels knew this was the place for their church, so they dropped it from the sky right down here among the flowers."

She opened the door and walked in very quietly. The sunlight coming through the stained glass windows threw a soft yellow glow on everything.

"I shall never be afraid here," decided Betty. "Dolly and I will keep very still until the angels come."

Sliding into one of the high-backed seats, Betty tried to tell Dolly how she ought to behave in church. They curled up like two kittens, their heads resting on a hymn book; Dolly's mother's voice grew softer and softer while the warm sunlight danced and played upon them.

* * * * *

"Mary, Mary, come quickly and see what I have found!"

"Coming, father. Has someone left their gloves or purse on the seat?"

"Better than that, my dear. I have found the sweetest thing in God's world — a little child," and

the big man very tenderly took up Betty, who was still tightly clasping her doll.

A little look of fear showed in her pretty brown eyes as she felt the warmth of his strong arms around her. But when she gazed into his kind, happy face, and saw a child just a little larger than herself, watching him with loving eyes, her hand went up to his neck and slid inside his collar, the way it did in father's. Resting her head on his shoulder, Betty, for the first time since leaving home, felt happy and contented. Mary, the other little girl, whispered, "Ask her, father, how she happened to be here in the church, so early in the morning."

"Well, little one, how did you get lost?" asked the man.

"I'm not lost," Betty answered. "I had to leave my mother. I promised not to bother her, so I came away."

"Where were you going?" eagerly inquired Mary.

"I was not going any place, except here," Betty answered. "I came here, where the angels could take care of me. My father, who is my partner in business, told me they would, and he knows."

"Well, who's your father, and what is your name?" asked the man.

"My name is Betty Dean," she replied.

"Oh, father," said Mary, "you know what mother told me about the angels not coming where we live, so they sent us to find this dear little girl. We will take her with us to the picnic and mother will know what is best for her."

"Will you go with me, dear, and let me take care of you?" said the man. Betty looked closely at him and all around the church very carefully before she answered: "Yes, I like you very much, and I will go with you. It must be right or you would not have come here in this church — the Angels' Church — for me."

Mary put out her hand for Betty's, and the father held the other one in his own, while Mary explained that it was her father's holiday and they were going to Eagle Rock Valley to have a grand picnic. A great many of their friends were coming too. She and father had started before mother, so they could leave some flowers in the little church. "This is how it happened that we found you, and I am so glad," said Mary. "Now we shall be great friends."

And Betty thought she would soon learn to love Mary nearly as much as she did Hope and Olive.

"Ah, there comes mother," cried the man. Betty

looked up and saw a lady coming towards them. She was sitting in a little wagon, drawn by two cunning burros. Their long ears stood straight up and their faces looked so wise that Betty's eyes danced with joy at the thought of riding behind them.

The lady smiled pleasantly as she stopped her quaint steeds. "Why, William dear, where did you find that darling child? Give her to me this minute."

When the man had put Betty in the wagon and explained how they had found her, Mary's mother put her arms around Betty and drew her very close to her.

CHAPTER X

"Mary, open one of the baskets, and as we drive along we will give this child some breakfast."

Betty thought her heart was going to jump right out of her throat when the lady said, "There, my child, you may drive Tom and Jerry while I get you something to eat."

Betty, so happy to be driving the cunning burros, could hardly take time to eat all the good things that were given her, and what seemed the shortest drive of her life was the one she took that glorious morning from the Church of the Angels to the picnic grounds at Eagle Rock Valley.

"Look, Betty, there is the Eagle," exclaimed Mary, pointing to the immense rock in the distance.

The beautiful valley which they were now entering, looked, with its walls of hills, like a grand drawing-room. Its only picture was the stone shaped like an eagle, which seemed to be hanging on the side of the

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hill, with wings outspread. It appeared to hover over the spot as if unable to move.

"Betty, Betty, see! All the people are coming!" And so they were, a jolly, merry crowd of men, women and children, carrying heavy baskets that were filled with goodies.

The women were soon busy setting tables and putting up hammocks, while the men took the children for a romp among the hills. How these strong men knew how to play. Betty never thought there were such good times in the world. They played ball, Indians, and hide-and-go-seek. Whenever Betty was afraid of falling, one of the men would help her as kindly and gently as her own father. She couldn't climb as well as these California children, who scampered fearlessly up and down the hills.

"My, but I am hungry!" Mary's father finally exclaimed. "See, the mothers are waving for us to come to dinner."

He took Betty's hand and, giving a regular Indian war-whoop, for the others to follow, they dashed down the hills, into the little dining room under the trees, where the table was spread. It was made of rough boards, resting on rocks, but Betty had never seen anything so tempting.

Her friend seated her next to him, and while they talked, laughed and chattered all at once, he loaded her plate with good things, chicken, cakes, California fruits, honey and delicious preserved figs.

"How I wish mother could have come and hear these people laugh; it surely would have done her good," thought Betty. Her friend saw the wistful look and said, "Now, people, I think if you will all keep quiet, this little girl will tell us why she came to Los Angeles, and why she left her mother."

Betty looked down at her plate and felt a little bashful. Then, raising her eyes, she saw the kind faces bending toward her, and when Mary's mother said, "Do tell us, dearie," she answered:

"Well, I came to California because my Uncle Robert said there were no policemen here. I am afraid of policemen. My nurse says they are very cruel to little girls."

At this all of the men sat up very straight and the women all looked very angry. Betty hesitated and turned to Mary's father. "Go on with your story, Betty," he said. "These people don't quite agree with your nurse, but they're going to keep still and not say one word until I let them."

"Just as you say, Bill," they agreed.

"Well," Betty went on, "Uncle Robert said that the policemen had all run away to the mountains and were hiding in the hills, but I saw one in the city this very morning, so that's not true."

At this everyone laughed so heartily that it rather frightened Betty, and she moved a little closer to her friend.

"It is certainly true," he said. "I can say for sure that they all are out in the hills to-day, so you need not fear any of them. Isn't that right?" he asked, turning to the others.

"You're certainly right, Bill, and you can trust us not to spoil the kid's good time," they answered, laughing and winking knowingly at each other.

"Now, why did you leave your mother?" asked the children.

Betty's lips began to quiver and they knew tears were not far away.

"Oh, I can't tell them about that," she whispered to her friend.

"And you need not," he answered, patting her hand. "No, children, Betty doesn't want to talk any more. We all know why she came, and that is enough. We will have one more good play while the mothers pack the baskets, and then we must start for home, before

the sun hides behind the hills. Betty can drive Tom and Jerry all alone, and our home shall be hers as long as she wants to stay with us," which brought happy smiles to Betty's face.

As they rode along, everything seemed afire with the glow of the setting sun. Betty watched the baby lambs under the trees snuggling affectionately against their mothers' necks, the tiny chickens running to get under their mothers' wings, and the wabbly-legged calves close to their mothers' sides, and a sob came into her throat but she bravely kept from crying.

Betty drove the burros as carefully as she could until they arrived at a little town called Garvanza and came to a house where Mary said they lived. Beautiful roses almost covered their home and everything about it looked clean and sweet. As they went into the house Betty began dreading the darkness as she thought of going to bed alone.

The first thing she saw was a cunning little room with dainty muslin curtains at the windows and a dear little brass bed.

"This is my room," said Mary, "and you must sleep with me. Right next to us is mother's and father's room — you see we are all close together, as this is a bungalow."

"After we have had our supper and she is ready for bed, I know what I am going to do with Betty," said Mary's father. "I am going to roll her up in a blanket, hold her in my arms and rock her to sleep."

Tired little Betty, resting in the kind man's arms, watched the logs burning brightly in the wide brick fireplace. Almost before she knew it she had told him all about her dear Daddy and her sick mother. "I didn't want to leave him, but he said I was his little partner and must help mother get better. That's why I came away this morning. Nobody wanted mother to live with them because I was along to bother. I couldn't be a partner if I kept mother from finding a nice sunshiny house to get well in. I have to keep my promise to my father, so I — I just went away.

"I am very glad I did," whispered Betty, "because I found you, and you shall always be my very *very* best friend."

Then she told him how Margaret had frightened her by stories of bears and policemen. "I know you wouldn't let them hurt me if they came here," she added, snuggling a little closer, and the big man said, in a very tender voice:

"Never, my little girl, never."

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CHAPTER XI

Betty slept very late the next morning and was very much disappointed to find her friend had gone to the city. Mary explained that her father had to go to his work very early and couldn't come home until late at night, "but he said to tell you, Betty, that he was coming this afternoon and would bring you a surprise."

Betty played with the burros and picked flowers in the rose garden, but she longed for her mother. Finally the morning was gone, and most of the afternoon, and she and Mary sat on the verandah watching for the father. "I hear his car," said Mary, and catching hold of hands they ran to meet him. "There he is! There's father!" called Mary, but Betty could only see a great big policeman walking with a lady who looked like her mother.

"Mary, run, run fast, run before he catches us," and Betty rushed through the gate into the bungalow.

"Oh, save me, save me! It's a policeman! a

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policeman!" she gasped, as she rushed into the house.

Mary's mother held her very close and whispered, "Dear child, poor little frightened soul."

"Oh, Betty, Betty, where is my baby Betty?"

It was her own mother's voice, and she was saying, "My dear, my darling, why did you leave me? Didn't you know I couldn't live without my child, and that I love you better than my life? I never meant it when I said you were keeping me from getting well," and she covered Betty's face and hands with kisses.

A voice from outside asked, "May I come in, Betty?" It was the voice of Mary's father.

"Oh, do come," answered Betty. "I want my mother to know you and help me thank you."

"But I am afraid you won't like my clothes, Betty. Are you sure you want to see me?"

Betty thought this was very funny talk, but she said very seriously, "I want you to come. I love you — I shall always love you, always — always."

Before Betty could say any more she was picked up from the floor by the strong arms of her friend. She wanted to cry and scream, for he certainly wore a policeman's coat, and there, too, was the awful club.

But the voice that made even the children at the picnic listen, said: "Don't cry, my little Betty, my

clothes can't keep me from being your very best friend. Someone has told you wrong stories about policemen. Every man you saw at our picnic was a policeman and to-day wears a uniform just like this. You know they were good to you, little girl, and some day I want you to love our brass buttons and not be afraid of our clubs, because whatever wrong we may do, we all love little children, and our clubs shall always be used to protect them."

And Betty, this time, instead of running away as fast as her little legs would carry her, threw her arms around the policeman's neck and gave him a big hug.

Then they all walked down the street to a large, rambling house called a "villa," and there the policeman said he thought they could find a place to stay, where they would be happy and comfortable.

On a wide verandah that was covered with vines banked with roses, stood an elderly woman with a white cap on her head. Before they could finish the question, "Do you take children?" she had told Betty in her sweet way to gather all the flowers she wanted, and Betty knew they had found one place at last where children were loved and wanted.

* * * * *

Spring has come, and the birds are singing and the

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boys are playing with marbles, and the little girls are skipping their ropes, and Betty has kept her promise to bring mother home to father, strong and well.

Daddy, Olive, Don Carlos and Reddy were all at the station to meet her. Betty was very happy to think that this time she was coming home to them, with a present for each, and would never leave father again.

They all went to the house with her and stayed to dinner, Reddy, too, because Mrs. Dean was so glad to see him she let him sit on a chair next to Betty.

When they were all talking, laughing, and asking a thousand questions, Mr. Dean took a little letter out of his pocket. "Listen, children, let me tell you a joke on Betty. Do you know, she just loves policemen, and when she was in California she ran away and followed them to a picnic."

"Betty! Never! Never! Not our Betty, Betty Dean," cried the children, pointing their fingers at her.

"Yes, our very own Betty. Just be quiet and I will prove it to you." And this is what he read:

"'My dear father: I know a policeman. He is a very fine man. He is my very best friend. I know a lot of policemen. They are fine people. Once I was lost and a policeman found me. Tell all the little girls and boys if they get lost to have a policeman find

them and he will be their friend too. I must close now.

Your loving friend and partner,

Betty Dean.'"

The children all clapped their hands, and Don Carlos said: "Perhaps Betty would like to trade Reddy for a bear!"

"Anyway," answered Betty proudly, "I am not afraid of them any more, am I, Mamma?"

"No, my darling, and it was not your fault that you ever were. It was all mine because I let Margaret frighten you," said Mrs. Dean, with tears in her eyes.

"Never mind, mother dear. I have found you and you are the sweetest nurse in the world."

After the children had all gone, but not before they had all promised to come early in the morning, Betty went quietly to the library, but Daddy, instead of waiting for her to come to him, jumped up and, taking her in his arms, said:

"My Betty, dear, father's girlie, you don't know how happy it makes me to have you home again, and how proud I am of my little partner."

And as Betty went up the stairs she stopped half way, on the landing, and because she was not going to Margaret and darkness she waved her father a perfectly joyous and happy "Good night."

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